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IAC-D-100/19
27 July 1956

Validity Study of NIE 31-2-55:

Yugoslavia's International Position,

published 7 September 1955

1. This estimate, written from the vantage point of September 1955, was a little too cautious, but was essentially valid as of the time it was written. It placed more stress on Tito's desire to maintain a flexible position between the two major power blocs than we do at present in the light of recent developments. However, it emphasized that the development of Yugoslav-Bloc ties would continue and indicated that this process would probably include "cautious moves toward re-establishment of party-to-party ties." Yugoslavia's actual moves during the intervening period have not materially varied from those predicted in NIE 31-2-55.

2. The principal shortcomings of NIE 31-2-55 were its failure to anticipate how far and fast the Soviet leaders would go along lines likely to reduce Yugoslav suspicions about them and how willing Yugoslavia would be to accept evidence that Soviet policy had indeed changed. Although we expected that the USSR would make continuing efforts to convince the Yugoslavs of its good faith, NIE 31-2-55 did not foresee such developments as the violent denunciation of Stalin and Stalinism in the Bloc. These developments in fields outside the narrow scope of Yugoslav-Soviet relations per se have almost certainly done much to convince Tito and his colleagues that Soviet policy was in fact developing along lines desired by them and that there would no longer be "great personal danger" in closer relations with the USSR. On its side, Yugoslavia has accepted special bonds of friendship and common interest with the USSR without waiting for the development of a "significant" weakening of Kremlin control over the Satellites and the emergence of conditions in which Yugoslavia would have a "real voice in Communist affairs." In short, the Russians have given more and Tito has demanded somewhat less than we foresaw in NIE 31-2-55.

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